

When your garden hose starts to leak, crack, or wear out, it may be time for a new one. But what can you do with that old garden hose? We'll give you a head's up on what you can and should never do with your worn-out garden hose.

Don't Put It in Recycling

The number one thing you *don't* want to do with an old garden hose is put it in the recycling bin. It can muck things up. In the recycling world, garden hoses are what are known as "tangles." Tangles include hoses, ropes, chains, and electrical cords.

A single tangle can cause a massive disruption, and recycling facilities see a significant amount of them each day. Tangles are known to tangle up equipment, potentially resulting in safety issues for workers and mechanical issues for machinery. All this leads to downtime and extra expense in facilities across the nation.

Garden hoses are troublesome enough to rank in the top five most problematic contaminants and the third most expensive contaminant to a recycling facility. The rankings came from a working group of recyclers that represents 75 percent of the recycling capacity in the country.

How to Reuse an Old Garden Hose

Helpful hint guru Heloise and the [One Good Thing blog](#) have a few creative suggestions for repurposing your old garden hose. You can:

- Use pieces to cover the blades on saws and other cutting tools by cutting off pieces of the hose and then slitting them down one of the sides.
- Turn it into a soaker hose by puncturing it with holes.
- Protect stabilized trees by sliding a piece of hose over the rope you're using to secure the tree; this prevents the rope from cutting into the tree.
- Make chains and handles easier to grip by sliding sections of hose over the metal handles on buckets or metal chains on swings.
- Create a doorstop by cutting off a small section of hose and then securing it firmly under an open door.

If none of the above suggestions fit your needs, and you can't come up with any other use for your old garden hose, then it may be time to discard it in the trash. Keeping your old hoses out of recycling can help keep recycling facilities running smoothly, efficiently, and safely.